

# Education e-Newsletter, April 2014



## News

### **Get Ready for Earth Day. Here are some learning opportunities.**

**Watch orioles, win great prizes!** Your school, 4-H group, or scout troop can win great prizes by watching Baltimore orioles — a bird that is easy to see even in urban areas if you provide them with food.

The Great Wisconsin Oriole Count involves setting up an oriole feeder using oranges and grape jelly, spending parts of two consecutive days in May observing orioles at the feeder and reporting the highest number of orioles seen at the feeder at any one time. That's it.

Kids can learn about a lot of topics by studying orioles — flight, geography, migration, animal behavior, adaptations, you name it! Oriole Count educational materials will get them started,



[http://www.wibirdathon.org/nrfw/cute\\_editor\\_uploads/KidsKit.pdf](http://www.wibirdathon.org/nrfw/cute_editor_uploads/KidsKit.pdf)

The first 60 groups to register for the Oriole Count will win FREE oriole feeders donated by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology and Mequon's Wild Birds Unlimited. And two teams will win a Birdwatchers' Bonanza donated by Eagle Optics: five pairs of binoculars, a spotting scope, and tripod. These two prizes will go to (1) a team picked by a random drawing and (2) the team that raises the most money.

You have the option to use the Oriole Count to raise money for Wisconsin's Bird Protection Fund to support conservation work in Costa Rica's Osa Peninsula, where many of Wisconsin's orioles spend the winter.

For more information, go to <http://www.wibirdathon.org/nrfw/oriolecount.asp>

Questions? Contact Alyson Douglas, Birdathon Coordinator at the Natural Resources Foundation of WI, at [info@wibirdathon.org](mailto:info@wibirdathon.org).





**Join DNR Educators for an Earth Day Chat on April 8.** Go online

<http://dnr.wi.gov/chat/expert.html> at noon on April 8<sup>th</sup> to participate in an online chat with educators from the DNR. We'll talk about things you can do for Earth Day and events happening in the state parks.



**Outdoor Explorer Backpacks Available at Libraries in April.** Warmer weather will bring greater opportunities to get kids outdoors, so check out an Outdoor Explorer backpack and hit the trail with books, identification guides, bug box, magnifying lens, animal cards and leaf rubbing plates. Children and their parents/caregivers can explore nature in a backyard, neighborhood, and anywhere you travel. The following libraries have been chosen to pilot test the packs which will be available through inter-library loan in April. Ask your librarian about the Outdoor Explorer backpack and start exploring.

- Milton Public Library
- Elkhart Lake Public Library
- Clear Lake Public Library
- Kenosha Community Library
- Matheson Memorial Library, Elkhorn
- Cudahy Family Library
- New Holstein Public Library
- Lake Mills Public Library
- Bonduel Public Library
- Land O' Lakes Library
- Black Creek Village Library
- Baraboo Public Library
- Platteville Public Library
- New Berlin Public Library
- Campbellsport Public Library
- Kendall Public Library
- Western Taylor County Public Library

Packs are funded through a grant from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Foundation.



**DNR's MacKenzie Center is hopping with spring activity.** The hiking trails are open, the wildlife are shaking off the winter blues, and green life is starting to sprout up

in our woods and prairies. Contact us at [DNRMacKenzieCenter@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRMacKenzieCenter@wisconsin.gov) to set up a day or overnight fieldtrip for your class or group today. You can also stop by and learn how to make maple syrup at our annual Maple Festival on Saturday April 5<sup>th</sup>.



**2014 Air, Air Everywhere Poetry Contest - For all 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in Wisconsin.** May is Clean Air Month. Help DNR celebrate this May by leading your students through an activity (or more than one!) from the [Air, Air Everywhere Teacher's Activity guide](#), which aims to teach students about air quality and the importance of clean air.

Teachers, after completing the Where's the Air? activity with your students, please submit the student's original poems and riddles to the Wisconsin DNR for judging. The winning poem (and 2 runners-up) will be featured on EEK! (<http://dnr.wi.gov/eeek/>), the Department's website for kids. The winner will receive an award certificate AND a class set of "it all adds up to cleaner air" solar calculators to share with his/her classmates. The teacher of the winning student will receive a certificate for a free [Project WILD, or Project WET workshop](#).

**Requirements:**

- ✓ Open to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 5<sup>th</sup> grade students only
- ✓ Teachers can submit up to three entries per class.
- ✓ Any form of original poetry or riddle is acceptable. Entry must be 200 words or less and describe air and/or the importance of clean air.
- ✓ Writing must be the original work of the student
- ✓ Each entry must include the name of the author, their teacher, the teacher's e-mail and phone number and the school address.

Email entries to: [Lindsay.Haas@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Lindsay.Haas@wisconsin.gov) or mail entries to: Lindsay Haas, Wisconsin DNR, 141 NW Barstow Street, Rm. 180, Waukesha, WI 53188.

Entries **must be received by Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014** to be eligible. Contest entries will not be returned and will become the property of the contest sponsor. Teachers of the winning students will be notified by Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014.



**Invader Crusader Awards:** Now is the time to nominate your favorite champion in the fight to slow the spread of invasive species! The Wisconsin Invasive Species Council is calling for nominations for the [2014 Invader Crusader Awards](#), to be presented on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Invader Crusader Awards honor Wisconsin citizens and organizations – both volunteer and professional – for their significant contributions to the prevention, management, education or research of invasive species that harm Wisconsin’s land and waters. The award recognizes efforts working at all scales – from neighborhoods to statewide parks, lakes and forests. Nominate [an Invader Crusader](#) today! **Deadline is Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>.**



**Protect the Places Your Play Invasives Video Contest:** This is your opportunity to let your inner director out, showcase your camera skills, and create a short video illustrating why you care about invasive species and how easy and even fun invasive species prevention can be.

The goal of the video contest is to increase awareness of invasive species that invade the favorite places we play and to teach people how to prevent the spread of invasive species in these habitats. Details on how to enter the contest can be found at:

<http://www.seagrant.wisc.edu/Home/Topics/InvasiveSpecies/Details.aspx?PostID=1818>

## **Resources**



**Forest Exploration Kit for Early Childhood Education:** Help young children get in touch with nature through a new resource kit you can check out to explore the forest in your backyard or neighborhood. The two new kits, developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Foundation, are now available for loan from the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education and the Wisconsin Child Care Information Center. Each kit contains two activity guides with hands-on explorations and samples of DNR publications to help you teach about Wisconsin’s trees, birds, wildlife, flowers, and more. Simple tools are included to aid with exploration including: identification guides, bug box, magnifying lens and animal cards. Take one of the reading books and share it with children outdoors in the shade of a tree. Create recycled art using ideas from one of the booklets. Put kids in motion with music and movement selections, and then build a tree as a healthy snack. Contact the resource centers directly about checking out this kit; then take a safari in your neighborhood, no experience necessary.



**E-cycle - You know that your old TV or cell phone isn’t supposed to go in the trash.** And you probably also know that it should be recycled. But do you know why it’s so

important to recycle your old electronics? Or what happens to them once they leave your hands? Or how Wisconsin's electronics recycling law may represent the future of waste management? Find the answers to all of these questions and much more when you order the DNR's new, FREE "World of Difference" poster (WA-1629). Done in anime style with only a few words, the front of the poster depicts the life of an electronic device from mining to disposal. The back of the poster is packed with information, discussion questions, prompts for further research and a link to a related activity aimed at middle and high school students. This poster will soon be followed by a behind-the-scenes video at an electronics recycling facility. You can view and order the poster and other e-cycling publications here (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Ecycle/Outreach.html>)



## **Educational Opportunities**

**Education Summit:** Wisconsin's Third Annual Invasive Species Education Summit hosted by the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council will be: **Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm** at Beaver Creek Reserve in Fall Creek, WI. The Education Summit is a place where invasive species educators can share information, messaging and materials; get the latest updates on emerging invasive species issues and tools; and come home with new best practices to enhance your work. Registration materials coming soon on the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council [website](#).



### **Green and Healthy School Upcoming Workshops**

**Free School Gardens Workshops for Green & Healthy School Educators!\*\*** In this workshop, participants will discuss why youth gardening and garden-based education is important and will learn strategies to plan, design, and implement child-centered youth gardens for school, early childhood and after-school sites. Participants will also review garden-based curriculum and share ideas for incorporating such lessons into their classroom.

This workshop will be presented by the Wisconsin School Garden Initiative, a collaborative project of Community GroundWorks, the University of Wisconsin and other state agencies. The project promotes youth gardening and garden-based education to improve the health of Wisconsin's children through trainings, resource

development and technical assistance supporting gardens and garden-based education at schools, early childhood centers and after-school programs across the state.

**Dates and Locations:**

May 13, 2014 from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm at Middleton High School, Middleton, WI

May 22, 2014 from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm at Summit Environmental School, La Crosse, WI

**Registration:** Registration ends May 6 for the Middleton location and May 15 for the La Crosse location. To register, please go to: <http://bit.ly/1nH6uN8>

**Not a member of a Green & Healthy School?** Participants are required to register their school as a Green & Healthy School to attend free of charge. A charge of \$25 will be assessed to any participant not with a registered Green & Healthy School. Visit [www.GHSWisconsin.org](http://www.GHSWisconsin.org) to learn more.

**Free Composting in Schools Workshop for Green & Healthy School**

**Educators!\*\*** Join composting experts as you discover how to introduce composting into your school. You'll be provided with an introduction to composting and vermicomposting, the challenges and techniques of composting in schools, how to manage food waste and tying composting into the Common Core standards. Personnel from schools with successful composting programs will be presenting about their methods and how they have integrated composting into their lunchroom, classroom and school site.

This workshop is open to all members of the school community, but facility managers, food service personnel, teachers and administrators are encouraged to attend.

**Date and Location:** April 30, 2014 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Dane County Extension Office, Madison

**Registration:** Registration ends April 22nd. To register, please go to: <http://bit.ly/1g4O9oJ>

**Not a member of a Green & Healthy School?** Participants are required to register their school as a Green & Healthy School to attend free of charge. A charge of \$25 will be assessed to any participant not with a registered Green & Healthy School. Visit [www.GHSWisconsin.org](http://www.GHSWisconsin.org) to learn more.

**Project WET & Project Learning Tree for Green and Healthy Schools\*\*, April 8.**

Retzer Nature Center, Waukesha. 9-3:30. Project WET is a national interdisciplinary K-12 water education program. The focus of this workshop will be water conservation in schools. Project WET includes 90 hands-on, water focused activities developed in the classroom by teachers. PLT uses the forest as a "window" on the world to increase students' understanding of our environment; stimulate students' critical thinking; develop students' ability to make informed decisions on environmental issues; and instill in students the commitment to take responsible action on behalf of the environment. Thank you to the Natural Resources Foundation and the DNR Bureau of Drinking Water & Groundwater for funding this workshop. To register, go to: <http://bit.ly/1bmPege>.

The workshop will be offered at the reduced price of \$10 for Green & Healthy School faculty & staff. Not a member of a Green & Healthy School? Participants are required to register their school as a Green & Healthy School to attend at the reduced fee. A charge of \$50 will be assessed to any participant not with a registered Green & Healthy School.

**\*\*** In order to attend one of these workshops at a reduced cost and receive the stipend, attendees must be from a registered G&HS. Lunch will be provided as part of the workshop and schools will be provided an expense stipend after the workshop of \$100 per attendee (up to 4 individuals from each school) to be used to cover expenses of attending the workshop (substitute fees, mileage, etc.) or expenses related to Green & Healthy Schools efforts thanks to a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information on any of these workshops, contact Katie Boseo at [katie.boseo@uwsp.edu](mailto:katie.boseo@uwsp.edu) or 715-346-4254. To learn more visit: [www.GHSWisconsin.org](http://www.GHSWisconsin.org)



**Project Wild and Project Wild Aquatic Workshop, April 12.** Norda Education Programs, 503 Miner Ave E Ladysmith Wisconsin. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Join other teachers to learn about and try activities from the Project Wild environmental education curriculum. All participants receive Project Wild and Project Wild Aquatic curriculum materials along with a host of Wisconsin-specific educational resources. This workshop can help you meet the environmental education requirement for teacher licensed with stipulation. Cost: \$35. Contact the instructor Mark Stensvold, [mark@norda.com](mailto:mark@norda.com).



Questions about Education e-Newsletter? Contact: [Carrie.Morgan@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Carrie.Morgan@wisconsin.gov)

